

Silene seelyi Morton & Thompson

Seely's silene

Caryophyllaceae (Pink Family)

Status: State Sensitive, USFWS Species of Concern

Rank: G2G3S2S3

General Description: Perennial with a branched caudex and short, slender rootstocks, rather strongly glandular with multicellular, often purplish-septate hairs; stems very slender, decumbent or ascending, up to 12 inches long; leaves numerous, elliptic to ovate-lanceolate, $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch broad, thin, acute to acuminate, sessile or short-petiolate; flowers perfect, 2-several in open, leafy cymes; calyx about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long, tubular-campanulate, 10-nerved; corolla purplish, the claw of the petals about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long, not auricled, the blade $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long, more or less oblong, bilobed to about midlength and usually with a small lateral tooth below each lobe; appendages 2, from merely callous thickenings to as long as $\frac{1}{16}$ inch, entire; carpophore about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch long, glabrous; styles 3, exserted; seeds brown, $<\frac{1}{16}$ inch long, very faintly reticulate.

Identification Tips: *Silene seelyi* is somewhat similar to *S. menziesii*, but may be distinguished as follows: the leaves of *S. seelyi* are ovate or lanceolate, broadest below the middle and very small ($\frac{3}{4}$ inch long), glandular-puberulent and glandular ciliolate, while the leaves of *S. menziesii* are obovate or oblanceolate, broadest above the middle, larger (3 inches long), and puberulent but not glandular.

Phenology: Blooms late May through August.

Range: Local endemic; Wenatchee Mountains of southern Chelan and adjacent Kittitas counties in WA.

Habitat: Shaded crevices in ultramafic to basaltic cliffs and rock outcrops, and occasionally among boulders in talus. Occurs from 1500 to 6300 feet in elevation. It occurs where the canopy cover is less than 30% and on slopes of 15 to 20%. Associated species include alumroot (*Heuchera cylindrica*), Chelan penstemon (*Penstemon pruinosus*), and Wallace's selaginella (*Selaginella wallacei*).

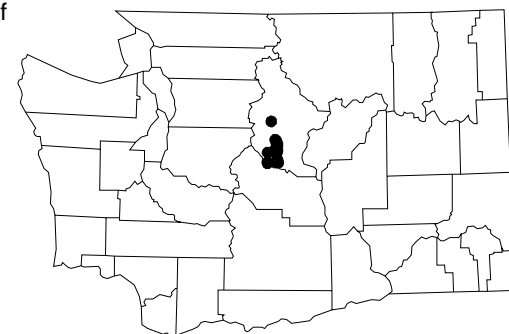
Silene seelyi

Seely's silene



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Known distribution of
Silene seelyi in
Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Ecology: *Silene seelyi* is restricted to sites with poor nutrient and water availability; competition with other vegetation is, therefore, generally minimal. The sites are relatively stable, although slope failures and fracturing of the rocks do occur.

State Status Comments: The limited range and relatively narrow habitat requirements contribute to the species current status.

Inventory Needs: Appropriate habitats within the known range should continue to be inventoried.

Threats and Management Concerns: Road construction and rock climbing activities pose the greatest threats to the taxon.

References:

Croft, L.K., W.R. Owen and J.S. Shelly. 1997. Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project Analysis of Vascular Plants.

Hitchcock, C. L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1964. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 2: Salicaceae to Saxifragaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 597 pp.